

## GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	Emergency Pregnancy Service of Rochester D.B.A. Birthright of Rochester
Location/Address	830 South Broadway, Rochester, MN 55904
Date and Location of Site Visit	Friday, June 23, 2017 Location: EPSR office, 830 South Broadway, Rochester
Grantee Participants	Alicia Hunt-Welch, Director Diane O'Mara, Board member
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman
Grant Agreement #/PO #	Grant Agreement #109501 / Vendor #0000285534

### **PURPOSE:**

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

### **OVERVIEW**

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current? [Yes](#)
2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment? [Yes.](#)

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3. **Where is this central file located?** *In the office, file cabinet. In addition, electronic documents are also stored in our online system.*
4. **Who is responsible for this central file?** *Alicia Hunt-Welch, Director and Diane O'Mara, Board member*
5. Does the central file include
- The grant proposal? *Yes*
  - The award letter? *Yes*
  - The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments? *Yes*
  - Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes? *Yes*
  - The work plan? *Yes*
  - Any/all payment requests (invoices)? *Yes*
  - Any/all signed subcontracts? *Not applicable (no subcontracts)*
  - Any/all Progress Reports? *Yes*

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment? *Yes*
2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately? *Yes*
3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner? *Yes*

## CONTRACTUAL

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors? *Yes*
2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate? *Not applicable. No subcontractors used.*
3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation?

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### PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time? *Not applicable to EPS of Rochester; no paid staff.*
2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant? *Not applicable to EPS of Rochester; no paid staff.*
3. **Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding:**
  - Payroll? *No*
  - Travel? *Yes*
  - Overtime? *No*
  - Timesheets? *No*
  - Taxes? *No*
  - Purchasing? *Yes*
  - Compensated time off? *No*
4. Are employees time sheets approved? *N/A*  
By whom (what position)?  
By the Executive Director?
5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee? *N/A*
6. **Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed?** *Yes. All expenses are approved by two members of the board before a check is written by the Treasurer. All checks require two signatures.*

Additional Comments:

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### PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

#### **Program History**

- **When was your program started? Why was it started?** *Emergency Pregnancy Service of Rochester (Birthright of Rochester) was organized in 1970. Our mission is to provide non-judgmental support to women who face an unplanned pregnancy, provide support to women who are pregnant, and to mothers parenting newborns.*
- **What need does your program fulfill?** *A non-judgmental, caring person to talk with, answer questions on provide direction on help available in the area, and support those women carrying their baby to term, and support mothers of babies in need of help and guidance.*
- **How has the program grown or changed since its beginning?** *Decades ago our organization primarily provided free pregnancy testing and guidance. However during the last decade we have expanded our clothing closet, established a layette gift bag program for new moms, and through PA grant funding during the last ten years provide diapers and baby hygiene items to mothers struggling with basic needs.*

#### **Grantee's Target population**

- **Who does the organization primarily serve?** *Working, low income women/parents and unemployed women/families.*
- **What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage?** *We serve Rochester and its suburban and rural areas; within a 30-mile radius of Rochester. A majority of our clients are 24-40 years of age. We serve about an equal population of White, Hispanic, and Black, in addition to Asian, African, Middle Eastern, and Native American peoples.*
- Review recent Demographic reporting.

#### **Leadership and Governance**

- **Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they?** *Board Chair/Director: Alicia Hunt-Welch; Organizational Treasurer: Julie Taylor; Karna Gloe, Barbara Schuh, Diane O'Mara, Kathy Mandery, Marylyn Piotrowski, Margaret Eggerichs, and Susanne Befort.*
- **How often do they meet? How are they informed of organization's progress and challenges?** *The Board meetings quarterly or more often if business arises. In addition, twice monthly board members are updated as to progress, changes and any issues that will need to be addressed.*

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- **How supportive is the Board of the program?** *The Board is extremely supportive of the program and the clients we serve.*
- **How is the program staffed? Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff?** *EPSR is staffed by volunteers. Only client advisors with extensive training are able to work solo; all other volunteers are supervised. The Director reviews intake sheets to assure all office and grant procedures are followed and addresses any suggestions for improvement or further education with individual volunteers, as needed.*
  - **How are staff evaluated on their performance?** *Occasionally office staff is observed. Clients are also occasionally asked about the service they have received.*
  - How long have PA staff been employed there?** *No employees, however the volunteers we have now working with clients have been with our organization for several years.*
  - **How are staff background checks done?** *Background checks are not conducted at this time.*
  - **What is your organization's policy on complaints for staff and clients?** *Hear client input; hear input of office staff on the situation; offer suggestions, if necessary; inform board members, if need be.*

### **Budget**

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities? *Yes*
- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope? *Yes*
- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing? *No*
- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place? *Not to my knowledge*
- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed.

### **Review Work Plan including:**

#### **Partners**

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program? Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources? What is your most common referral source? *N/A*
- Challenges with partners or specific counties? *N/A*

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### Work Plan

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.

How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing? Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed? Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016? Is there anything in particular you want to share about Emergency Pregnancy Service of Rochester (Birthright of Rochester) has closely followed our grant application proposal. Our organization currently provides all serves that were outlined in our application by providing free pregnancy testing, a client advisor to provide guidance and information, maternity and baby clothing, layette gift bags to mothers of newborns, and basic hygiene needs of diapers, wipes and baby wash to mothers/families in need. In our grant application we requested funds for production and distribution of our newsletter. Since this particular expense was not allowed for grant funding; this is the only way our application differs in implementation from what was originally proposed. No other activities or services have been added or removed since our application was awarded.

In comparing our current number of Positive Alternative clients served to those in the last year and a half, the number of clients served has increased. From July 2016 to April 2017 on average we served 44 PA-eligible clients per month; of those on average 39 had been to EPSR in the past and 5 were coming to our office for the first time.

During May 2017 we served 58 PA-eligible clients; and of those 45 had been to EPSR previously and 13 were first-time new clients. These counts are up compared to our monthly average, and in comparison to PA clients seen in May 2016.

I believe a factor in this increase was internet and social media advertising we conducted in May. By utilizing Google Ad Words search words, we were able to target our box ads to only people that were search topics such as “unplanned pregnancy”, “free pregnancy test”, “free baby clothes”, and “pregnancy resources in Rochester MN” for example. Using this avenue EPSR is only charged for the number of people that click on our ad and direct them to our webpage for information.

We also used Facebook and Instagram to target individuals within 30 miles of our office to see ads. Early tests indicated that the most activity was occurring from Thursday to Sunday and so this was the timeframe our ads would be scheduled to run. Some targeted woman 16-24 using an image of a younger woman and trendy text, while other ads targeted 18-36 year-old women with a slightly varied message. I also thoughtfully scheduled ad run times to coincide with Prom weekends, Memorial Day and Graduation weekends – times when higher concentrations of people would be on Facebook and

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Instagram to post photos from those events and looking to see updates from friends and family.

I feel it was a successful advertising campaign. In addition to increased numbers in our office, almost immediately after the campaigns started we had many calls to our office just asking about the services we provided. Many noted they saw/found (Birthright of Rochester) EPSR online.

Using this media avenue, we were able to target the audience we desired and receive a complete recap of the total number of people who were exposed to our ad, their gender, ages and more. Over a course of a week 144 additional people “Liked” our page on Facebook and began “Following” it; to be notified of when we post updates.

We look forward to closing out the current grant cycle year on June 30 and are thankful for the opportunity to be a Positive Alternatives Grantee for the 2017-18 grant cycle.

- **Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons?** *We do not anticipate any changes will be needed.*

### Participants:

- **What type of outreach does the organization put into action?** *EPSR has focused our outreach to online advertising, as that is the avenue our clients are most using now. Facebook, Instagram and Google AdWords search have encompassed a majority of our outreach.*
- **What is working well?** *Within a day after targeting these social media avenues, we had an increased number of calls to our office asking about what we do/offer. In the last month of advertising this way, we have seen more new/first time clients visiting our office.*
- **What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients?** *We have not experienced a problem with retaining clients, as they come back to us to receive a package of diapers once a month; an excellent incentive for them to return.*

### Data:

- **How is program data collected and by whom?** *Two board members, Sue Befort and Maggie Eggerichs, are in charge of gathering statistical information for client intake sheets. Director Alicia Hunt-Welch provides direction on collection and views reports monthly.*
- **Is data collected useful to agency?** *Yes. We use it to track number of clients served and needs, in addition to using it to analyze trends, compare to state-wide statistics, and inform the public/donors on how the community is being served.*

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- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection? *No, fine as is.*

### **Review Evaluation**

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. **Do you have any questions on your evaluation?** *No questions at this time. I believe the Safe Sleep Education and Parent Support Education we conducted with the 2016-17 evaluation was beneficial to clients and we look forward to preparing the summary.*

### **Miscellaneous**

- Anything else you would like to share? *EPSR has been a PA Grant award recipient since 2006, the first year the grant was established. EPSR continues to be grateful for the funding to support our program aiding us in serving hundreds of clients each year.*
- Anything else we haven't asked? *No, Mary is very thorough.*

### **What can we do to help?**

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? *Topics and services that are available to out-state agencies are always good and useful to our organization.*
- Any topic suggestions? *Not at this time.*
- Feedback or suggestions for the state? *Not at this time.*
- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program? *Continuity is good. The process right now is familiar and has become manageable.*

### **Summary:**

*Grant Manager will summarize further steps or decisions that were discussed at the site visit.*

*Emergency Pregnancy Services (EPS) of Rochester has been a Positive Alternatives (PA) grantee since the inception of the grant program. They have had a presence and are a well-established nonprofit organization in the Rochester area in south eastern Minnesota since 1970. They receive PA funding for the following programming: outreach, material support and pregnancy testing and support. They also serve their clients with referrals to the many community resources and partners that may be helpful with their given situations.*

*EPS of Rochester is unique as an affiliate of Birthright International. They rely totally on volunteers to staff and run their organization. They also have a volunteer led board of directors*



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that actively manage the day to day operations of the center. Their volunteers that work directly with clients receive extensive training through their charter organization.

EPS of Rochester does not have a current policy of using background checks for their volunteers that work directly with clients and/ or money. It was suggested at the site visit that implementing criminal state background checks would be a good policy to implement and should be a point of discussion at a future board of director's meeting.

Outreach plans and efforts recently initiated by EPS of Rochester have been robust. They have good community recognition and have made excellent partnerships with many organizations in the area that are able to provide important services to their clients. They do not try to duplicate services already available in the area but are happy to make warm referrals for their clients. Outreach via social media is also promoted. Ads promoting the Center are placed in several online advertising venues including Facebook, Instagram and Google AdWords. Their social networking campaign has also increased their "LIKES" on Facebook and gained additional community recognition. Social Media outreach has helped to gain continued recognition for the organization and has visibly increased the flow of clients coming to the Center.

The current Evaluation Project conducted for Year 1 of the new grant cycle included a study on their safe sleep education and parent support education program. A new project plan will be due the first week in September.

EPS of Rochester has continued to have a challenge of securing enough dedicated volunteers to staff the Center. This struggle offers the board of directors an opportunity to look at new ways to attract committed volunteers to staff the center for additional open hours. Another struggle includes finding affordable housing for clients in need. This issue has been highlighted throughout the state of Minnesota but is more pronounced in an area like Rochester that has high occupancy rates and high rental costs creating a gap in affordable housing. Cradle of Hope temporary financial assistance fund for rent or utility costs, Catholic Charities, Saint Vincent DePaul, emergency assistance from the County and Salvation Army are used for referral by the grantee, however, there continues to be an unmet need for affordable housing in the Rochester area.

EPS of Rochester continues to responsibly manage their PA grant funds providing necessary services to women in need with unplanned pregnancies. They are always eager to provide necessary reporting requirements for the grant program in a timely manner. I look forward to working with the volunteer staff of EPS of Rochester for the remainder of the PA grant cycle.

**Date: June 19, 2017**

**Grant Manager: Mary Ottman**

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